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## GOP confidence in 2024 vote count low after years of false election claims



An election worker carries two ballots to be verified inside the Maricopa County Records Office, Nov. 10, 2022, in Phoenix.

Associated Press

## Aruba's underwater wonderland



## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins



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## GOP confidence in 2024 vote count low after years of false election claims

From Front

By **CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY**  
and **LINLEY SANDERS**  
**Associated Press**

Few Republicans have high confidence that votes will be tallied accurately in next year's presidential contest, suggesting years of sustained attacks against elections by former President Donald Trump and his allies have taken a toll, according to a new poll. The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll finds that only 22% of Republicans have high confidence that votes in the upcoming presidential election will be counted accurately compared to 71% of Democrats, underscoring a partisan divide fueled by a relentless campaign of lies related to the 2020 presidential election. Even as he runs for the White House a third time, Trump continues to promote the false claim that the election was stolen. Overall, the survey finds that fewer than half of Americans — 44% — have "a great deal" or "quite a bit" of confidence that the votes in the next presidential election will be counted accurately. While Democrats' con-

fidence in elections has risen in recent years, the opposite is true for Republicans. Ahead of the 2016 election, 32% of Republicans were highly confident votes would be counted accurately — a figure that jumped to 54% two years later after Trump won the presidency. That confidence level dropped to 28% a month before the 2020 election, as Trump signaled to voters that the voting would be rigged, and now sits at 22% less than 16 months before the next presidential election. "I just didn't like the way the last election went," said Lynn Jackson, a registered nurse from El Sobrante, California, who is a registered Republican. "I have questions about it. I can't actually say it was stolen -- only God knows that." Trump's claims were rejected by dozens of judges, including several he appointed. His own attorney general and an exhaustive review by The Associated Press found no evidence of widespread fraud that could have changed the results. Multiple reviews, audits and recounts in the battleground states where Trump disputed his loss confirmed Democrat Joe

Biden's victory, including several overseen by Republican lawmakers. Even so, Trump's attempts to explain his loss led to a wave of new laws in GOP-dominated states that added new voting restrictions, primarily by restricting mail voting and limiting or banning ballot drop boxes. Across the country, conspiracy theories related to voting machines have prompted many Republican-controlled local governments to explore banning machines from tallying votes in favor of hand counts. The AP-NORC poll suggests that the persistent messaging has sunk in among a wide swath of the American public. The survey found that independents — a group that has consistently had low confidence in elections — were also largely skeptical about the integrity of the 2024 elections. Just 24% have the highest levels of confidence that the votes will be counted accurately. Chris Ruff, a 46-year-old unaffiliated voter from Sanford, North Carolina, said he lost faith in elections years ago, believing they are rigged to favor certain candidates. He also sees no difference between the



President Donald Trump supporters gather with some signs claiming a stolen election outside the Philadelphia Convention Center as they await general election tabulation results, Nov. 6, 2020, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

two major parties. "I don't vote at all," he said. "I think it only adds credibility to the system if you participate." The conspiracy theories about voting machines, promoted through forums held around the country, also have taken a toll on confidence among Republicans even though there is no evidence to support them. About four in 10 U.S. adults are highly confident that scanning paper ballots into a machine provides accurate counts. Democrats are about twice as confident in the process as Republicans — 63% compared to 29%. That marks

a notable shift from a 2018 AP-NORC poll that found just 40% of Democrats were confident compared to 53% of Republicans. Gillian Nevers, a 79-year-old retiree from Madison, Wisconsin, has worked as a poll worker and said she has confidence -- based on her experiences -- in the people who oversee elections. "I have never seen any shenanigans," said Nevers, who votes Democratic. "The claims are unfounded and ridiculous. Because they are being so widely projected, I think they have a lot of people worried who I don't think should be." □

## U.S. formally rejoins UNESCO after five-year absence



The logo of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is seen during the 39th session of the General Conference at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, Nov. 4, 2017.

Associated Press

By **MATTHEW LEE**  
**AP Diplomatic Writer**  
**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The United States on Tuesday formally rejoined the U.N.'s scientific, educational and

cultural organization after a five-year absence. The U.S. return to the Paris-based UNESCO was based mainly on concerns that China has filled a lead-

ership gap since the U.S. withdrew during the Trump administration. UNESCO's governing board voted last week to approve the Biden administration's proposal for the U.S. to rejoin. On Monday, the U.S. delivered a document certifying it would accept the invitation. On Tuesday, UNESCO's Director General Audrey Azoulay said it was official. A welcome ceremony with a flag-raising and VIP guests is expected in late July. "This is excellent news for UNESCO. The momentum we have regained in recent years will now continue to grow. Our initiatives will be stronger throughout the world," Azoulay said. The Biden administration had announced last month

that it would apply to rejoin the 193-member organization that plays a major role in setting international standards for artificial intelligence and technology education. The U.S. is now the 194th member of UNESCO. "Our organization is once again moving towards universality," Azoulay said. She called the return of the United States "excellent news for multilateralism as a whole. If we want to meet the challenges of our century, there can only be a collective response." The Trump administration in 2017 announced that the U.S. would withdraw from UNESCO, citing anti-Israel bias. That decision took effect a year later. The U.S. and Israel stopped financing UNESCO after it

voted to include Palestine as a member state in 2011. The Biden administration has requested \$150 million for the 2024 budget to go toward UNESCO dues and arrears. The plan foresees similar requests for the ensuing years until the full debt of \$619 million is paid off. That makes up a big chunk of UNESCO's \$534 million annual operating budget. Before leaving, the U.S. contributed 22% of the agency's overall funding. The United States previously pulled out of UNESCO under the Reagan administration in 1984 because it viewed the agency as mismanaged, corrupt and used to advance Soviet interests. It rejoined in 2003 during George W. Bush's presidency. □



# EPA sets stricter limits on hydrofluorocarbons used in refrigerators, air conditioners

By MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Environmental Protection Agency is enforcing stricter limits on hydrofluorocarbons, highly potent greenhouse gases used in refrigerators and air conditioners that contribute to global warming.

A rule announced Tuesday will impose a 40% overall reduction in HFCs starting next year, part of a global phaseout designed to slow climate change. The rule aligns with a 2020 law that calls for an 85% reduction in production and use of the climate-damaging chemicals by 2036.

Here's a look at HFCs and what the United States and other countries are doing to limit their use.

## WHAT ARE HFCs?

Hydrofluorocarbons are highly potent greenhouse gases commonly used in refrigerators and air conditioners. HFCs produce greenhouse gases that are thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide. They often leak through pipes or appliances that use compressed refrigerants and are considered a major driver of global warming.

## WHAT IS BEING DONE TO LIMIT HFCs?

More than 130 countries, including the United States, have signed a 2016 global agreement to greatly reduce use and production of HFCs by 2036.

The Senate ratified the so-called Kigali Amendment to the 1987 Montreal Protocol on ozone pollution last year in a rare bipartisan vote. The measure requires participating nations to phase down production and use of HFCs by 85% over the next 13 years, as part of a global phaseout intended to slow climate change.

Scientists said the agreement, reached in Kigali, Rwanda, could help the world avoid a half-degree Celsius of global warming. Ratification of the amendment, signed last year by President Joe Biden, follows



Ed Newby, owner of All Star A/C and Heating, works on an air conditioning unit on June 26, 2023, in Houston.

Associated Press

reduction required by the end of this year. It requires a 40% overall reduction from 2024 through 2028.

Companies that produce, import, export, destroy, use, process or recycle HFCs are subject to the rule. EPA officials said the rule would help ensure the U.S. leads the way as countries around the world implement the Kigali Amendment. The HFC phasedown, "bolstered by domestic innovation to develop alternative chemicals and equipment, is paving the way for the United States to tackle climate change and strengthen global competitiveness," said Joe Goffman, principal deputy assistant administrator of EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. White House climate adviser Ali Zaidi said the rule will help develop next-generation technologies for refrigeration, "ensuring that American workers reap the benefits of a growing global market for HFC alternatives."

## WHAT DOES INDUSTRY SAY?

The Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute, which represents air conditioning, heating and commercial refrigeration manufacturers, called the rule a crucial step to implement the AIM Act.

"Our industry appreciates the work of the EPA and the timely issuance of this

rule as we prepare for the next HFC reduction step-down next January," said AHRI president & CEO Stephen Yurek.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF INDUSTRY DOES NOT COMPLY?

The EPA rule includes a range of administrative penalties, including license revocation and retirement of allowances for companies that don't comply. Fines and criminal penalties also can be imposed. EPA said it has finalized administrative consequences retiring more than 6.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for 2022 and 2023 for companies that misreported data or imported HFCs without required allowances. □

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# BofA hit with \$250M in fines and customer refunds for 'double-dipping' fees

By **KEN SWEET and MICHELLE CHAPMAN**

**The Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Bank of America will reimburse customers more than \$100 million and pay \$150 million in fines for "double-dipping" on overdraft fees, withholding reward bonuses on credit cards and opening accounts without customer consent.

Combined, it is one of the highest financial penalties in years against Bank of America, which has largely spent the last 15 years trying to clean up its reputation and market itself to the public as a bank focused on financial health and not on overdraft fee income and financial trickery.

BofA must refund \$100 million to customers, pay \$90 million in penalties to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and \$60 million to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. "Bank of America wrongfully withheld credit card rewards, double-dipped on fees, and opened accounts without consent," said CFPB Director Rohit Chopra, in a statement.



**A customer uses an ATM at a Bank of America location in San Francisco, Monday, April 24, 2023. Associated Press**

"These practices are illegal and undermine customer trust." Empowered by a broad mandate from the White House, Chopra and the bureau have focused heavily in the past year on the issue of "junk fees" fees charged to Americans that are often seen as unnecessary or exploitative by banks, debt collectors, airlines and concert ven-

ues. Banks such as BofA, JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo and others have been a target for the bureau under the Biden administration. Part of the fines and penalties come because Bank of America had a policy of charging customers \$35 after the bank declined a transaction because the customer did not have enough funds in their ac-

count, the CFPB said. The agency determined that the bank double-dipped by allowing fees to be repeatedly charged for the same transaction. The fees often came when customers had routine monthly transactions, like a gym membership. If a customer had too low of a balance to cover the transaction, it would be declined

and BofA would charge the customer a \$35 fee. The business, who hasn't been paid, often would recharge the customer's account, resulting in another \$35 non-sufficient funds fee.

The bank ended this practice last year, but will still have to repay customers who got charged before the policy was changed.

BofA has been cutting down on its reliance on overdraft fee revenue for more than a decade, and cut how much it charges customers for an overdraft to \$15 last year. Brian Moynihan, the bank's CEO and chairman, told The Associated Press in 2022 that under these new policies, overdraft fee income was down 90% from 2021. The bank said that it voluntarily reduced overdraft fees and eliminated all non-sufficient fund fees in the first half of last year. Bank of America also offered people cash rewards and bonus points when signing up for a card, but the CFPB said the bank illegally withheld promised credit card account bonuses. □

# Leslie Van Houten, follower of cult leader Charles Manson, released from California prison

By **CHRISTOPHER WEBER**  
**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Charles Manson follower

Leslie Van Houten walked out of a California prison Tuesday after serving more than 50 years of a life sen-

tence for her participation in two infamous murders. Van Houten "was released to parole supervision," the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation said in a statement. She left the California Institution for Women in Corona, east of Los Angeles, in the early morning hours and was driven to transitional housing, her attorney Nancy Tetreault said. "She's still trying to get used to the idea that this real," Tetreault told The Associated Press.

Days earlier Gov. Gavin Newsom announced he would not fight a state appeals court ruling that Van Houten should be granted

parole. He has said it was unlikely the state Supreme Court would consider an appeal.

She is expected to spend about a year in transitional housing, learning basic skills such as how to go to the grocery store and get a debit card, according to her attorney.

Van Houten, now in her 70s, received a life sentence for helping Manson's followers carry out the August 1969 killings of Leno LaBianca, a grocer in Los Angeles, and his wife, Rosemary.

The LaBiancas were killed in their home, and their blood was smeared on the walls afterward. Van Houten later described holding Rose-

mary LaBianca down with a pillowcase over her head as others stabbed her, before she stabbed the woman more than a dozen times as well.

The slayings happened the day after Manson followers killed actress Sharon Tate and four others. Van Houten, who was 19 at the time, did not participate in the Tate killings.

Van Houten was found suitable for parole after a July 2020 hearing, but her release was blocked by Newsom, who maintained she was still a threat to society. She filed an appeal with a trial court, which rejected it. She then turned to the appellate courts. □



**Leslie Van Houten attends her parole hearing at the California Institution for Women Sept. 6, 2017, in Corona, Calif.**

**Associated Press**

## U.N. warns its development goals for 2030 are in trouble

By EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

In a grim report, the U.N. warned Monday that at the current rate of global progress 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty and 84 million children won't be going to school in 2030 and it will take 286 years to reach equality between men and women.

The report on progress in achieving 17 wide-ranging U.N. goals adopted by world leaders in 2015 to improve life for the world's more than 7 billion people said that only 15% of some 140 specific targets that experts evaluated are on track to be reached by the end of the decade.

Close to half the targets are moderately or severely off track, it said, and of those 30% have either seen no movement at all or regressed including key targets on poverty, hunger and climate.

The ambitious goals for 2030 include ensuring that hunger is eradicated and nobody lives on less than \$2.15 a day which is the extreme poverty line, providing every child with a quality primary and secondary school education, achieving gender equality, ensur-



U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks during a press conference at the diplomatic lounge in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Saturday, July 1, 2023.

ing all people have clean water, sanitation and access to affordable energy, reducing inequalities, and taking urgent action to combat climate change.

"Unless we act now, the 2030 agenda could become an epitaph for a world that might have been," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a foreword to the report. "Failure to make progress means inequalities will continue to deepen, increasing the risk of a fragmented,

two-speed world."

The report was released ahead of a summit that Guterres has called during the annual gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly in September, which he said will be "a moment of truth and reckoning."

Undersecretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Li Junhua said conflicts including the war in Ukraine, climate change, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic espe-

cially its devastating financial impact on developing countries, and geopolitical tensions are all "threatening to derail hard-earned progress" toward achieving the goals.

He said in a foreword that the pandemic saw the largest decline in childhood vaccinations in three decades, an increase in tuberculosis and malaria deaths, and learning losses in 80% of the 104 countries studied. It also interrupted three decades of progress

in reducing poverty, and produced the largest rise in inequality between countries in three decades, he said.

"By May 2023, the devastating consequences of war, conflict and human rights violations had displaced a staggering 110 million people of which 35 million were refugees the highest figure ever recorded," the ECO-SOC chief said.

Li told a news conference launching the report that at the September summit, the U.N. would like political leaders to come up with "a new roadmap" to accelerate action at the global, regional and national level to achieve the goals by 2030. With seven years left, the report said achieving the goals is "in deep trouble" and "it is time to sound the alarm."

At current rates, it said not only will 575 million people still be living in extreme poverty in 2030 but only about one-third of countries will meet the target to reduce national poverty levels by half.

"Shockingly, the world is back at hunger levels not seen since 2005, and food prices remain higher in more countries than in the period 2015-2019," the report said. □

Associated Press

## Amazon pushes back against Europe's pioneering new digital rules

By KELVIN CHAN

AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Amazon is disputing its status as a big online platform that needs to face stricter scrutiny under European Union digital rules taking effect next month, the first Silicon Valley tech giant to push back on the pioneering new standards.

The online retailer filed a legal challenge with a top European Union court, arguing it's being treated unfairly by being designated a "very large online platform" under the 27-nation bloc's sweeping Digital Services Act.

Amazon, whose filing to the

European General Court was made available Tuesday, is the second company to protest the classification.

German online retailer Zalando filed a legal claim two weeks ago with a similar argument.

The Digital Services Act imposes new obligations on the biggest tech companies to keep users safe from illegal content and dodgy products, with violations punishable by potentially billions in fines or even a ban on operating in the EU. The rules, which will take effect on Aug. 25, are expected to help Europe maintain its place as stan-

dard setter in global efforts to rein in the power of social media companies and other digital platforms.

Seattle-based Amazon is one of 19 companies classed as the largest online platforms and search engines under the DSA, which means they will have to better police their services to protect European users from hate speech, disinformation and other harmful online content.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, declined to comment directly on the case, saying it would defend its position in court. Amazon said it supports the DSA's aims of tackling

systemic online risks but doesn't agree that it fits the description of a "very large online platform" that

earns revenue primarily through advertising and distributes "speech and information." □



The Amazon logo is seen in Douai, northern France, April 16, 2020.

Associated Press



## Under pressure, Tunisia takes back hundreds of migrants trapped in a border zone with Libya

By **BOUAZZA BEN BOUAZZA**  
Associated Press

**TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)** — At least 500 migrants from sub-Saharan Africa have been transferred back to Tunisia after being pushed into a dangerous no-man's-land on the Libyan border and trapped for a week there without access to basic necessities, aid agencies said Tuesday.

The group was driven out earlier this month amid a spike in anti-migrant and racism-fueled tensions linked to a killing in the Tunisian port city of Sfax, a hub for traffickers organizing risky and sometimes deadly boat journeys across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy. One such boat sank Sunday off the Tunisian coast. Coast guard officers retrieved one body, rescued 11 people and declared 10 others as missing, the Sfax prosecutor's office said.

The fate of hundreds of migrants pushed into the Tunisia-Libya border region drew concern from international humanitarian groups. It also raised questions about Tunisia's migration policies, weeks after the European Union offered Tun-



A migrant holds a placard reading "All muslims are brothers" during a gathering in Sfax, Tunisia's eastern coast, Friday, July 7, 2023.

Associated Press

sia's increasingly authoritarian government \$1 billion to help its slumping economy and to beef up border services to stop migrant boats from crossing to Europe.

A 29-year-old man from Ivory Coast said that uniformed men had taken migrants from their homes in Sfax in the middle of the night in early July and brought some 600 people

to the border area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Tunisian-Libyan land border near Ben Guerdane.

Speaking to The Associated Press last week, he accused the Tunisian National Guard of beating them "like animals, like slaves," and assaulting women in the group. He claimed that Libyan security at the bor-

der fired shots into the air to keep the civilians at bay.

The name of the man, who said he entered Tunisia legally in 2019 and works on a golf course, is being withheld for safety reasons.

On Tuesday, he said that he and 100 others have now been transferred away from the border to the inland Tunisian town of Medenine, where they are

sleeping in a courtyard. Temperatures in the area climbed above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) on Tuesday. A spokesperson for the International Organization for Migration said 158 migrants were transferred to a shelter in the town of Tataouine and another 353 people transferred to public structures in Medenine. The IOM said Tunisian authorities have not provided information about next steps for the migrants.

Under pressure from humanitarian agencies, Tunisian President Kais Saied on Sunday ordered the Tunisian Red Crescent to bring aid to the migrants. Saied stoked racist incidents earlier this year by railing at Black Africans who transit through Tunisia toward Europe.

On Monday, Saied denied mistreatment of migrants by Tunisian authorities, and lashed out at migrant traffickers he said were seeking to "destabilize Tunisia." He called for coordinated efforts to "tackle the origins, sources and causes of the problem" in addition to security measures. □

## U.N. debates deep sea mining as countries and companies now allowed to seek provisional licenses

By **DÁNICA COTO**  
Associated Press

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)** — A U.N. agency tasked with regulating the deep

sea is debating whether to open the Earth's watery depths to countries and companies that as of Monday were allowed to start

applying for provisional mining licenses.

The International Seabed Authority, based in Jamaica, launched a two-week conference on the issue Monday, a day after it missed a deadline to approve a set of rules and regulations to govern deep sea mining in international waters.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us," said Juan José González, the authority's council president. The authority has issued more than 30 exploration licenses but no provisional licenses so far.

The debate on whether to allow companies to extract precious metals from the

deep sea that are used in electric car batteries and other green technology comes as more than a dozen countries call for a ban or moratorium given environmental concerns.

Scientists have said that minerals in the deep sea take millions of years to form, and that mining could unleash noise, light and suffocating dust storms. However, companies have argued that deep sea mining is cheaper and has less of an impact than land mining.

Most of the current exploration is focused in the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, which covers 1.7 million square miles (4.5 mil-

lion square kilometers) between Hawaii and Mexico. It is occurring at depths ranging from 13,000 to 19,000 feet (4,000 to 6,000 meters).

On Monday, Canada announced that it supported a moratorium because there is no regulatory framework in place nor a deep understanding of the environmental impacts of deep sea mining.

"It is critical that the international community recognize its collective responsibility to safeguard the health and integrity of our shared global ocean for future generations," the government said in a statement. □



Coral on Moore Reef is visible in Gunggandji Sea Country off coast of Queensland in eastern Australia on Nov. 13, 2022.

Associated Press



## Aruba's underwater wonderland

**ORANJESTAD** - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating under water spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

### Tres Trapi

Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

### Antilla shipwreck

Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it

had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken world war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

### Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

### Mangel Halto

Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in



Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel

Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □





## Rhythms Circus Company Aruba: putting Aruba's name on the world stage



**Rhythms Circus Company Aruba is a talented group of young people working daily to present their art in the form of acrobatics, dancing, acting and singing. After an impactful participation in one of America's biggest talent shows, they are now bringing their amazing talent to Aruba!**

In a show full of light, music, and with performances to famous musical figures like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and Tina Turner, the group consisting of 15 people from various countries delights the audience with their artistic prowess at the Paseo Herencia Mall, every Wednesday and Friday starting at 7pm. Each day has a different show, so you can attend both nights for the complete experience!

The group, under the leadership of directors and creators Diego Jaramillo and Yamila Hernandez are opening the doors to the ballroom to our local audience as well as our visitors so that everyone can have the privilege of experiencing this wonderful show.

Hernandez explained that the idea for

this project started in 2010 when she came to work in Aruba. After being on the island for a while she decided to stay and live here, and she met Diego Jaramillo, who is currently her partner. Together they came with the idea to establish a company together with other professional artists, with the goal of living from their art.

Hernandez says that the work is hard – all of the performers are professional artists, and while the production of the show is not a challenge for them, selling the idea proved difficult since at the time, there weren't any shows of its kind on the island.

### America's Got Talent

Currently they are offering a show with music, choreography and at the end, they have a shocking acrobatics ending, one that was seen by thousands of people around the world when the group travelled to Los Angeles in the United States to represent Aruba in America's Got Talent. Hernandez said that the show was very important for them to meet the public present because people could experience this performance live and right before their eyes.

Their presentation in America's Got Talent "was incredible" and they were able to meet the jury and many other artists staying there for three months. But the exhaustion and physical toll was so great that Diego suffered an accident, and because of this, they had to cancel all future commitments.

"This is work for which you must have a lot of respect. Circus as such implies a lot of risk, we have to give all of ourselves, we need to be in a physical state where you cannot stop training, there needs to be steadfastness; but if you go past the



limit, your body cannot handle it. It seems that during this tour we went over the limit and Diego was injured right when we had to go sign up for the next part of the tour with America's Got Talent. That was frustrating," Yamila explained.


Thanks to their performance in America's Got Talent, they received a lot of offers. However, before that they travelled to Hungary, to the Budapest Circus Festival, and afterwards they decided to return to and remain in Aruba to show their talents up close at home.

### Future projects

Next month in July the group is travelling to Italy to perform at the show "Tu si que vales", and in August they are travelling to France for the program "La France a un Incroyable Talent", completing their travels in November in China, to perform at the Wuqiao International Circus Festival.

Even so, "these are short tours of maximum two weeks, because we are committed to our show in Aruba," Yamila explained.

### Reservations and tickets

To make a reservation to see this incredible display of creativity and acrobatics, scan the QR code which will take you directly to their website for a booking. To find more information about RCCA, please visit their Instagram page @rccaruba. 





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## Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

**According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.**

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who

continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers. According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of

Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista. Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays,

only around six of these houses remain. South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water

tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand. The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

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Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from **Rico and Gina Pascolini from Jessup, PA**

She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me the reason I got my passport and ever since then my husband



and I have cherished all the special memories and friends we made here and look forward to making more."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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## Aruban Fort: two in one

Episode CCXIV - 214

Every week, Etnia Nativa writes a new episode concerning culture and heritage, focusing on various aspects of native knowledge, transcendental wisdom, and the importance of upholding cultural identity. Its goal is to educate readers and encourage them to embrace a genuine island state of consciousness. In this segment, Etnia Nativa shares what island fortification meant in those days when invaders were to be repelled from the strategic position of a Fort.

In Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba, an old fort catches the eye. It is called "Fort Zoutman" or "Fort Saltman" in English. Its external walls are the oldest known buildings on our island. However, the buildings inside the fort were rebuilt in 1974. The Tower named Willem III, located next to it, is the fourth oldest structure in terms of age. It is only surpassed by the Fort itself, the Protestant church on Wilhelminastraat, built in 1864, and the former presbytery of Santa Cruz, constructed in 1863.

Returning to the legendary Fort, it has always been more of a symbol of rural peace in Aruba than malicious intent. This fort is housed in two buildings that originally had nothing in common with each other: Fort Zoutman and Tower Willem III. The fort has been used for a variety of purposes, and it has only seen action on a few occasions. The first time was against a single vessel that wanted to overpower a boat at anchor in the Paardenbaai (Bay of Horses), and the other time was against a troop of soldiers that tried to take the fort from the land side with the objective of dismantling it. Fort Zoutman was, in reality, a place of rest for military men who had nothing better to do with their time. At one time, the Fort served as an experimental garden for aloes. For nearly a hundred years, the police precinct house and the jail were located within the Fort. In olden days, the judge handed down sentences in the Fort, and the civil registrar solemnized marriages there. Goatskins, sheepskins, and postage stamps were stamped there, and citizens also came to pay their taxes there. For years on end, Fort Zoutman served as the storage room of the Department of Public Works, and in the cells of the former jail, coffins were stacked for those who had to



be buried as indigents; also, fireworks for New Year's Eve were stored there.

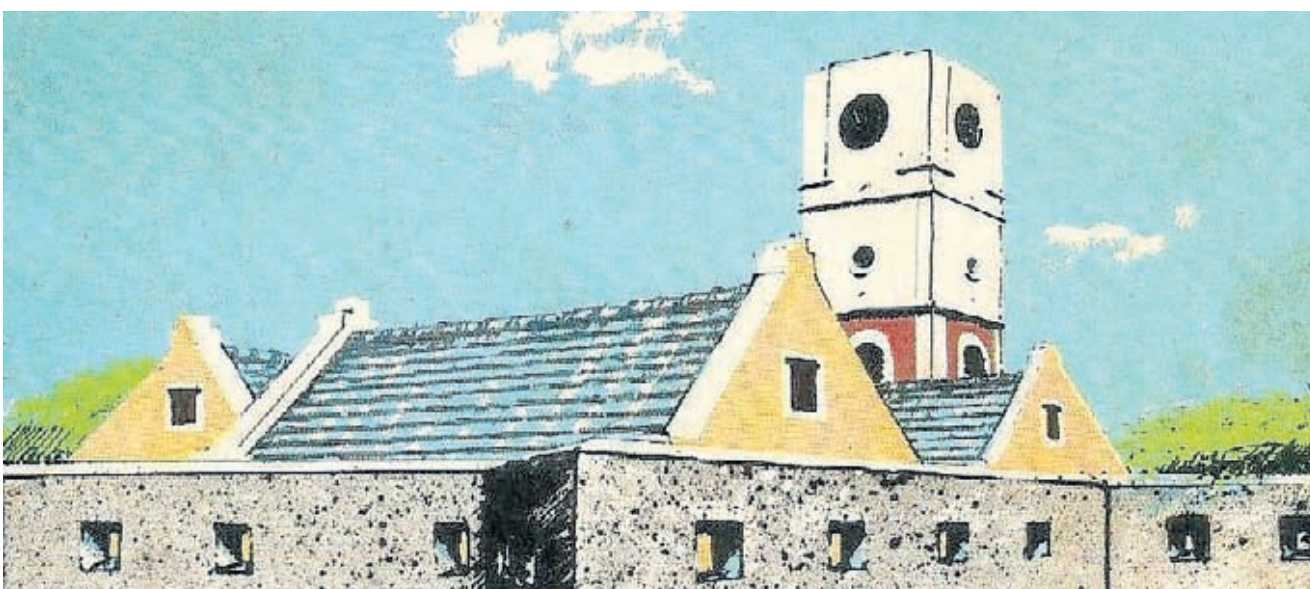
Until 1930, Fort Zoutman stood on the coast. However, due to the construction of a pier and the dredging of the harbor entrance, the coastline gradually moved further south as a result of landfills. In 1938 and thereafter, additional artificial fill-ups occurred, solidifying the coastline as we know it today. As a consequence of all these changes, Fort Zoutman is no longer located on the coast. The embrasures recessed in the walls, which were once armed with guns during the eighteenth century, now face the government offices rather than the harbor. However, before the coastline was changed, Fort Zoutman was located at a strategic site because its guns had, as their attack zone, the then sole entrance to the Paardenbaai, and its walls were designed to repel an assault from the land area.

Since 1795, the ideals of the French Revolution, "liberty, equality, and fraternity", have reached the ABC islands, where they found immediate acceptance. Under the command of Tula, a rebellion broke out in Curaçao. Due to the Franco-Dutch alliance, the director of Curaçao, Johannes de Veer, resigned from his position, and French warships entered the port of Curaçao, establishing the "Comite Militaire", which would be in charge of defense since the Netherlands had gone to war with England. One of the first measures taken by the Military Committee was the protection of the ports of the three islands, leading to the construction of Fort Republiek (currently Fort Nassau) in Curaçao, Fort Zoutman (and West Fort, now completely gone in Oranjestad), and presumably the fort on Bonaire, which received its current name of Fort Orange in 1816.

If you have a keen interest in exploring Aruba's heritage, Etnia Nativa's live experience is highly recommended. The owner's firsthand explanations and insights set Etnia Nativa apart from the rest. A personal touch that adds depth and authenticity to the experience, allowing visitors to forge a meaningful connection with the island's history, engage valuable insights, and gain a more profound understanding of Aruba's cultural traditions.

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## A brief history of the California Light House

**(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.**

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along

the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 ki-

lometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many de-



tails: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight

that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □





# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Church

1 Ice cream feature unit

6 Lasso over

10 "Hush!" 42 Plunder

11 Aspiration 1 DOWN

12 Sports spot 1 Sacred beetle

13 Some signs 2 Vene-

14 Pool tool zuela's capital

15 Posture 3 Penny words

16 Star pitcher 4 Pig

17 Brit. fliers sound

18 Kinsey topic 5 School org.

19 More than 6 Italia's capital

22 Antlered animal 7 Some

23 Tuning knob 8 Pound parts

26 United to intimidate

29 Argon or xenon

32 Casual top

33 Genetic stuff

34 "Little Women" author

36 Violin quartet

37 Plant life

38 Academy student

39 Airline prices

AFTER DAVIS  
TORT E DICT  
BROADCASTER  
AGOTAR ALI  
TOPIARY MAN  
RIP WING  
PEDAL BENDS  
ELIS TEA  
ELM BALKSAT  
KIN ELF ALA  
SPELLCASTER  
ASSET SHIRT  
TESTS TENTS

Yesterday's answer

9 Newark's county need

11 Sundae 28 Bakery

15 Blue top buy

17 River blunder

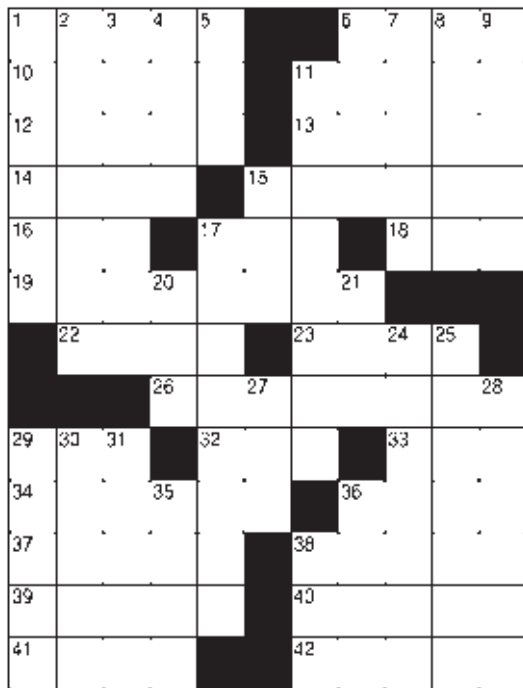
20 Joke contests 30 Assuage

21 Bakery count 31 Point

24 Aug- sources

25 Attack 36 — Alto

38 Truck part



7-12

AXYDI.BAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-12

CRYPTOQUOTE

AZE GSAKTU SCOT XETCDTP

LSCD N IINJT DA XCHH UCPP

— UAXNCH CDDTKDNAK

PTQNXND PNUAEPTE. — PCK

HTOF

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THERE ARE NO BEAUTIFUL SURFACES WITHOUT A TERRIBLE DEPTH. — NIETZSCHE

## Millennial Money: Stop using paper checks, already



A man signs a check in Anchorage, Alaska, April 17, 2006.

Associated Press

By KATE ASHFORD of NerdWallet

Sure, you're probably not using paper checks for most things. But are you returning payments to medical providers and insurance companies in the mail? Paying by check for the random parking ticket or your child's piano lessons? Now is a good time to stop: Check fraud tied to mail theft is up nationwide, according to a February alert from the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. And letter carrier robberies are also on the rise.

This is partially due to the effects of the pandemic, when thieves targeted government relief checks in the mail. "Fraudsters just went back to tried-and-true potential attack factors that seemed to be working," says Michael Bruemmer, head of global data breach resolution for Experian.

The U.S. Postal Service is vulnerable, and thieves who can access your checks can change the amount and ferret those funds right out of your bank account. And then it can take weeks to get the funds back.

"It's absolutely a life disruption event when you mail a check and it's been intercepted," says Mary Ann Miller, fraud and cybercrime executive advisor and vice president of client experience at consumer identity company Prove. "That can take all the money out of your account at once."

### USE PAYMENT ALTERNATIVES

Look for ways to pay your bills that don't require using the mail. Check your statement for online payment instructions, for example. "We are beginning to see more online options," Miller says. "In fact, some medical providers, like One Medical, have a very nice option to pay from a mobile app along with all of your medical information. I find it super helpful and modern." If you're paying individuals, ask if they'll accept electronic payment through PayPal, Venmo, Zelle or another cash app.

"There's really no need to be writing checks today," Bruemmer says.

Working with a vendor that doesn't offer an easy way to pay online? Call and ask if you can pay over the phone. "Paying by phone via the IVR — interactive voice response — or a live customer service representative is definitely a preferred option," Miller says. "Just make sure

you are calling the correct number for the utility or medical provider." □

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**Anthony Kiedis, from left, Flea, John Frusciante and Chad Smith, of Red Hot Chili Peppers, attend a ceremony honoring the band with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Thursday, March 31, 2022, in Los Angeles.**

**Associated Press**

**By GLENN GAMBOA**  
**AP Business Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Red Hot Chili Peppers, Ms. Lauryn Hill and Megan Thee Stallion will headline this year's Global Citizen Festival as the anti-poverty nonprofit looks to focus attention on increasing inequality for girls and young women around the world.

Global Citizen CEO Hugh Evans said the Sept. 23 event at New York's Central Park will be the centerpiece of his group's campaign to encourage supporters, especially those in

Gen Z, to take action on gender inequality, climate change and other issues. Studies show that half of Gen Z "feel disillusioned and powerless to make a positive impact," Evans told The Associated Press in an interview.

"As long as you and I have been alive, there was almost this sense of positive momentum in the world that almost felt like the eradication of extreme poverty could be inevitable," he said. "But the data suggests the world is now getting worse."

## Red Hot Chili Peppers, Ms. Lauryn Hill will headline Global Citizen Festival

According to the United Nations Population Fund, 257 million women around the world want to avoid pregnancy, but don't have access to modern contraceptives. The fund's partnership to provide reproductive health services is currently underfunded by \$100 million.

Education Cannot Wait, the United Nations fund that helps ensure nearly 20 million children in crisis continue learning, needs \$670 million for its work.

The Global Citizen Festival, which will also include performances from K-pop sensation Stray Kids and singer-songwriter Conan Gray, provides free tickets to the event in exchange for fans taking actions on the group's app and website that support these goals.

This year, that may mean asking Canada, Norway and Japan to donate more to the United Nations Population Fund.

It may mean pushing companies to join the United

Nations Race to Zero to set targets for reducing their carbon emissions. Or urging the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Italy and Australia to provide more funding to vulnerable countries to adapt to climate change. Global Citizen's use of supporters to convince political, business and philanthropic leaders to tackle some of the world's biggest problems is designed to appeal to younger generations, Evans said.

"These are pillars of what we know Gen Z cares about, but often they feel powerless because the data isn't on their side," Evans said. "We're talking to Gen Z in a way that they know their actions can have a scalable impact."

Singer Angelique Kidjo, who was recently named to this year's Great Immigrants list by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, said that her Batonga Foundation found that supporting girls and young women ends

up strengthening entire villages in her native Benin and throughout Africa.

"Helping women in a community is like starting a rolling stone that never stops rolling," said Kidjo, adding that it was the women who kept their villages safe during the COVID-19 pandemic by making masks and soap for hand-washing, as well as enforcing social distancing.

Not only will Hill and Megan Thee Stallion provide examples of female empowerment with their performances, but Evans hopes they will encourage their fans to take action during the event, which will be streamed on numerous digital platforms.

"For many decades, the Red Hot Chili Peppers have occupied that space where music and activism meet," said Evans, adding that the band's classic "Under the Bridge" was the first song he learned to play on guitar. "We couldn't be happier with this lineup." □

## Leonardo DiCaprio to fund scholarships, climate education at his former elementary school

**By ANDREW DALTON**  
**AP Entertainment Writer**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Leonardo DiCaprio will fund scholarships and a climate education program at the UCLA-based elementary school where he was once himself a scholarship student, the actor and the college said Tuesday.

The Leonardo DiCaprio Scholarship fund and the Climate Justice Education Program are set to begin in the forthcoming school year at the UCLA Lab School. "I was fortunate enough to attend the Lab School due to the generous contributions of UCLA donors, and my experience profoundly transformed my worldview," DiCaprio said in a statement to The Associated Press. "I am proud to have the chance to pass on my experience to those

who might otherwise miss out on this opportunity, and to help create a program that will help guide the next generation of climate warriors."

The school aims to provide innovative educational techniques for its students whose ages range from 4 to 12 that outside teachers can come to study.

DiCaprio's scholarship fund will give its students who need financial aid, which he got as a child when he went to the school in the 1980s, and will help the school to maintain the diversity it seeks. About 40% of its students need financial help.

"This scholarship fund will provide many children access to UCLA Lab School, just as Leo had," said Dr. Eric Esrailian, a professor in UCLA's Health Sciences de-



**Leonardo DiCaprio attends the world premiere of "Don't Look Up" in New York on Dec. 5, 2021.**

**Associated Press**

partment and a longtime friend of DiCaprio.

The new and separate climate education program will seek to teach students from pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade about the science behind climate change and about the pol-

icy and leadership needed to address it.

The school has sought to use its location, next to a creek amid redwoods on the Los Angeles university campus, to become a hands-on site for environmental teaching.

DiCaprio, 48, has long been an outspoken advocate for addressing the climate crisis.

Esrailian said the program "will position children — both at the Lab School and beyond — for a more sustainable and healthy life for themselves and for our planet."

"Expanding access to high-quality education and helping young people recognize the need to protect our planet are critical goals for our institution," UCLA Chancellor Gene Block said in a statement.

DiCaprio, the Oscar-winning star of "Titanic," "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," "The Revenant" and "The Departed," will next appear in "Killers of the Flower Moon," directed by his frequent collaborator Martin Scorsese. □



# How far golf has come in a year, how far it still has to go

By **DOUG FERGUSON**

AP Golf Writer

**GULLANE, Scotland (AP)**

— So much consternation about the fracture in the professional world of golf. So much speculation about where it will all lead.

That wasn't just Tuesday at a Senate hearing on how the about-face agreement between the PGA Tour and the Saudis came together. That was last year during a British fortnight of golf, when what passed as scandal now seems rather small.

Consider the Scottish Open a year ago.

All the rage was Ian Poulter among three players who had defected to LIV Golf, won a preliminary injunction in a U.K. court and were allowed to play The Renaissance Club alongside European tour and PGA Tour players who felt he was double dipping.

Names were being whispered about who was next to join the rival league. A whisper became a question to Cameron Smith, whose Aussie chill vibe gave way to irritation when he was asked if he was joining LIV as he sat next to the silver claret jug he had just won.

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan, two years into this battle against the group with whom he now wants to partner, was described by more than one observer as looking like a



**PGA Tour board member Jimmy Dunne, right, testifies alongside PGA Tour chief operating officer Ron Price during a Senate Subcommittee on Investigations hearing on the proposed PGA Tour-LIV Golf partnership, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington.**

Associated Press

U.S. president in his second term. Greg Norman was mocked for his slogan of golf being a "force for good" and still being bullish on bringing free agency to golf, even though the LIV Golf schedule was more restrictive than anything the PGA Tour and European tour required.

What did it all mean? Where will it all lead?

At least the questions haven't changed.

Across the ocean on Tuesday, eight players were on the range at The Renaissance Club while a half-dozen others went through their drills on the putting

range. Others were on the course for a late afternoon practice round, none seemingly interested in the Senate subcommittee hearing. None had a say in the first place as the last five weeks has shown.

Smith won the LIV Golf London event last week and said about going to Hoylake for his title defense in the British Open, "It feels like forever."

Consider all that has transpired in the last year.

Poulter and others under the U.K. sports resolution ruling kept playing European tour events from London to the Middle East for the next

eight months until the final ruling went against them, a decision handed down the week of the Masters.

Eleven players filed an antitrust lawsuit against the PGA Tour, and four of them tried to play in the FedEx Cup playoffs until a California judge refused to grant a temporary restraining order. LIV Golf joined the lawsuit, a countersuit was filed and the PGA Tour legal fees topped more than the \$36 million Dustin Johnson won last year in LIV.

And what was described as a watershed moment in PGA Tour history now seems more like water under the

bridge. Tiger Woods flew to Delaware to join Rory McIlroy and a small, elite group of players with the intent of reshaping the PGA Tour.

Monahan introduced a new model for the PGA Tour that created \$20 million tournaments and a plan for the best to compete against each other upward of 17 times a year. That was described as a "bridge year," though the concept for 2024 was the same with some wrinkles.

And to think the biggest argument was whether these \$20 million tournaments with limited fields would have a cut (a topic that remains under discussion).

What to make of that Delaware meeting now? A blueprint for the future or a waste of time?

And where does golf go from here?

Still to come is whether the PGA Tour policy board approves whatever final deal gets hammered out by the end of the year, if that even happens.

According to the framework agreement, the sides have to get the deal done by Dec. 31 unless they agree to extend it.

Documents obtained ahead of the Senate subcommittee hearing painted a bleak future for Norman if the deal goes through.

He has been less visible in recent weeks as CEO and commissioner of LIV Golf. □

## MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred praises computer challenge system over full robots

By **RONALD BLUM**

AP Baseball Writer

**SEATTLE (AP)** — A challenge system allowing appeals to a computer appears to be Major League Baseball's preference over a sole robot umpire.

MLB is testing the Automated Ball-Strike System at Triple-A this year. The computer makes determinations for half the games and in the other half, batters, pitchers and catchers can challenge human calls to the robot.

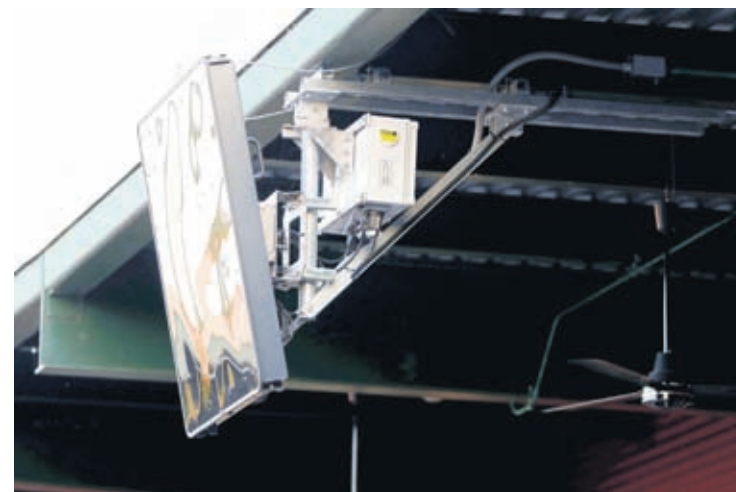
The challenge system was used at T-Mobile Park for Saturday's All-Star Futures Game. The human umpire was upheld on three of four calls.

"The people's reaction to it was really positive, really positive," Commissioner Rob Manfred told the Baseball Writers' Association of America on Tuesday. "The challenge system in terms of the reaction in the minor leagues, people are more comfortable with the challenge system than the full

ABS."

MLB launched several innovations this season, including a pitch clock, limits on defensive shifts and pickoff throws and larger bases. Manfred said last month the computer was not likely to be ready for the major leagues in 2024. The shape of a computer strike zone is still a subject of debate.

A decision would be up to an 11-man competition committee that includes six management representatives, four players and one



**A radar device is mounted on the roof behind home plate at PeoplesBank Park during the third inning of the Atlantic League All-Star minor league baseball game in York, Pa., July 10, 2019.**

Associated Press

umpire.

"Pleased that it's gone well

in the minor leagues," Manfred said. □



# Elina Svitolina has the Ukraine war and her baby in mind as she beats Iga Swiatek at Wimbledon

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**

AP Tennis Writer

**WIMBLEDON, England (AP)**

— The last time Elina Svitolina was Grand Slam semi-finalist twice, actually, in 2019 she was pursuing the usual trappings of success in professional sports: trophies, money, fame, etc.

Now Svitolina plays for more important reasons. For her daughter, Skaï, who was born in October. For her country, Ukraine, where a war that began with Russia's invasion in February 2022 continues to this day.

And Svitolina firmly believes that those quite different factors actually do affect the way she swings a racket and the way she handles important moments on a tennis court. Enough so that she is one of the last four women remaining at Wimbledon after adding to her series of surprising victories over major champions with a 7-5, 6-7 (5), 6-2 victory against No. 1-ranked Iga Swiatek on Tuesday.

"War made me stronger and also made me mentally stronger. Mentally, I don't take difficult situations as, like, a disaster, you know? There are worse things in life. I'm just more calmer," said Svitolina, 28, who once was ranked as high No. 3 and now is No. 76 after taking time off to start a family with her husband, tennis player Gael Monfils.

She only returned to the tour three months ago.

"Also, because I just started



Ukraine's Elina Svitolina reacts after winning a point against Poland's Iga Swiatek in a women's singles match on day nine of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Tuesday, July 11, 2023.

Associated Press

to play again, I have different pressures," Svitolina said after kneeling down, then covering her face with her hands, when Swiatek missed one last forehand at Centre Court. "Of course, I want to win. I have this motivation, like huge motivation, to come back to the top. But I think having a child and war made me a different person. I look at the things a bit differently." She received a wild-card entry from the All England Club to get into the field and now will face another unseeded player, 42nd-ranked Marketa Vondrousova, for a berth in Saturday's final.

Vondrousova, the 2019 French Open runner-up, beat fourth-seeded Jessica Pegula 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 by grabbing the last five games after being a point from trailing 5-1 in the last set at No. 1 Court. Pegula dropped to 0-6 in major quarterfinals.

"I don't know what happened," the left-handed Vondrousova said.

Both women's matches Tuesday were interrupted when rain arrived and the courts' roofs were shut so play could continue. Swiatek used the break to animatedly chat with her sports psychologist, who was up in the stands, then headed toward an off-court lounge

to huddle with her coach. None of that helped her figure out what was wrong with her spin-heavy forehand, which accounted for 57 total errors 28 unforced, 29 forced and 22 winners. Swiatek, who was coming off claiming her fourth Grand Slam title at the French Open last month, felt the change in the way Svitolina smacked balls over the Centre Court net. That included a stretch where Svitolina won 20 of 22 points during a stretch that spanned the end of the first set and start of the second.

"She played with more freedom and more guts.

Sometimes, she really just let go of her hand," Swiatek said, pantomiming a forehand, "and she played really, really fast."

Novak Djokovic reached his 46th Slam semifinal tying Roger Federer's record for men by defeating No. 7 Andrey Rublev 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-3, and next will face No. 8 Jannik Sinner. Djokovic is seeking a fifth consecutive championship at Wimbledon and an eighth overall numbers that also would equal Federer and his 24th career Grand Slam trophy. Sinner made it to his first major semifinal by eliminating Roman Safiullin 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

"It means a lot me," Sinner said. "We put a lot of work in many, many hours off court, a lot of sacrifice for this moment."

Svitolina certainly did not expect to still be around this deep into the fortnight. She originally wasn't even planning to get back in action after giving birth until around now. But she and Monfils started working out together on Jan. 2, and Svitolina's progress was substantial enough that she altered her timeline. Good call. She added the win against Swiatek to those against seven-time major champion Venus Williams in the first round, 2020 Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin in the third, and two-time Australian Open champ Victoria Azarenka in the fourth. □

# Dusty Baker buys his All-Star coaches blazers after getting them suits last year



American League manager Dusty Baker, of the Houston Astros, smiles during an All-Star Game press conference, Monday, July 10, 2023, in Seattle.

Associated Press

**SEATTLE (AP)** — Dusty Baker and the All-Star Game are tailor made for each other.

After buying suits for his All-Star coaches last year, Baker purchased sports jackets for Tuesday night's game.

"We look like a band this year because we got 'em all the same blue blazer," the 74-year-old Houston Astros manager said Monday. "And so the only thing is, as the leader of the band, I didn't wear mine. So I just had to let people know I was leader of the band."

Baker wore a green and black flannel zippered jacket to Monday's news conference. He is managing the American League All-Stars for the second straight year.

Houston lost to Atlanta in the 2021 World Series, then defeated Philadelphia last year for the title.

Phillies manager Rob Thomson was unaware of Baker's gesture last year.

"So now I feel bad," Thomson said. □